

Message Text

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13

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 TRSE-00 EB-11 AID-20 PM-07

NSC-10 SS-15 RSC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

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R 031115Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1397

INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TANARIVE

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EO 11652: DECON 12/31/73

TAGS: EFIN PFOR MR

SUBJECT: NEWSWEEK INTERVIEWS OULD DADDAH RE NEW CURRENCY

1. NEWSWEEK CORRESPONDENT MALCOLM MACPHERSON INTERVIEWED PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH JULY 31 CONCERNING MAURITANIA'S ISSUANCE NEW NATIONAL CURRENCY AND BREAK WITH FRANC ZONE. MACPHERSON EXPECTS INTERVIEW TO BE PUBLISHED IN ABOUT ONE MONTH IN CONNECTION NEWSWEEK ARTICLE ON DEVELOPMENTS IN FRANC ZONE. MACPHERSON PLANS ALSO VISIT MALAGASY REPUBLIC IN CONNECTION SAME STORY.

2. INTERVIEW COVERED LARGELY FAMILIAR GROUND OF WHY MAURITANIA WAS MOTIVATED TO CREATE NATIONAL CURRENCY. OULD DADDAH GENERALLY AVOIDED REFERENCES TO OTHER STATES BUT DID ALLOW SELF TO SPECULATE THAT IF CERTAIN OTHER FRANC ZONE MEMBERS HAD SIMILARLY STRONG FOREIGN EXCHANGE POSITION, THEY MIGHT HAVE FOLLOWED MAURITANIAN EXAMPLE. PRESIDENT REFERRED IN PASSING TO ENDING OF HIS COUNTRY'S "NEO-COLONIALIST" DEPENDENCY ON FRANCE BUT WAS OTHERWISE CIRCUMSPECT ABOUT CRITICIZING FORMER METROPOLE. ASSERTED CREATION OF OWN CURRENCY HAD BEEN LONG PLANNED BUT ACKNOWLEDGED THAT GIRM WOULD NOT HAVE MOVED SO

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SOON HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR PLEDGES OF ASSISTANCE FROM ALGERIA,

LIBYA, KUWAIT AND ZAIRE.

3. PRESIDENT DID NOT SPECIFY AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE GIVEN OR PLEDGED BY OTHER STATES TO NEW CENTRAL BANK. HE DIRECTED THAT THIS INFO BE FURNISHED MACPHERSON LATER BUT THIS WAS NOT DONE PRIOR CORRESPONDENT'S DEPARTURE. PRESIDENT CITED ZAIRE'S ASSISTANCE AS PARTIAL EXPLANATION WHY MAURITANIA, DESPITE ITS CLOSE TIES WITH MAGHREB, WOULD CONTINUE PURSUE POLICY OF MAINTAINING BONDS WITH BLACK AFRICA.

4. IN CONCLUSION, OULD DADDAH EXPRESSED WARM APPRECIATION OF ASSISTANCE BY USG AND AMERICAN PEOPLE TO RELIEVE MAURITANIA'S

DROUGHT CAUSED SUFFERING.
MURPHY

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